Off Season Basketball Workout

The off-season is a key time to work on skills as well as get stronger. It is also a time to take time off, play another sport or just get away for a bit to recoup. You may invest in playing a sport that compliments basketball, something like Volleyball or Track and Field (Sprints or Jumping events). When in doubt, play, play and play! Get into a spring league or travel ball. In the summer time, outside of our own summer camp, get to another one which are typically held late July early August. If you want to see your game improve you have to put in the time, it is that simple. Before starting this workout or any exercise program please consult your family physician.

How to plan your week:

The hardest thing to do is to ensure you get your workouts in. As busy as we all are, the key is to get into a routine. Routines help us create good time management skills, which covers everything we do. A sample Off Season Schedule would look something like the chart below. Keep in mind this is not taking into account the school day, time for homework, after school job etc.

Sample Schedule:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
<th>Saturday</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Strength train</td>
<td>Skills Shooting</td>
<td>Strength train</td>
<td>Play</td>
<td>Skills Shooting</td>
<td>Play</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Again, you will need to find something that works for you based on the time you have.

Strength Training:

Being strong on the court allows you to be a more physical player and aid in staying injury free. This program is designed to generate basic overall body strength conducive to basketball. Obviously you lift differently for football or baseball because it involves using the muscles differently. Basketball is a kinetic start and stop sport. So the training will mimic that. It will also include plyo-metrics, which will help strengthen the fast twitch explosive muscles in the body that allows you to be quick on your feet. In other words, jump higher, slide faster, and be lighter on your feet.

The weight training workouts will last about 45-60 minutes in the weight room. Here, it is about quality not quantity. So strict proper form is key. If you do the exercise right, the amount of weight you can move will go up. The exercises will be basic compound movements using more
dumbbells than barbells. Workouts will also include circuit training to get anaerobic conditioning, essentially sprints for your muscles. You will do this 2 times a week resting 1-2 days in between workouts. It is also always a good idea to shoot after you lift, say around 100 shots (free throws or short jumpers) to maintain the feel of the ball. At the end of each workout, it is key to stretch for 10-15 minutes, to maintain a level of flexibility. So if you are serious you are spending any where from 90 minutes to 2hrs from start to finish.

There are a number of sport specific trainers out there, so if you have the means, invest. If you choose this path, take a long hard look at their credentials. Do they have a basketball background? Who is their current clientele? There clients, where did they start and where are they now (was progress made)? Does the trainer look fit (practice what he/she preaches)? Who are they certified with or do they have a degree in exercise physiology? What are their training philosophies? Anybody can say they are a trainer, but the last thing you want to do is invest in someone that doesn’t know how to get you to your training goals.

**Nutrition:**

You are what you eat! What you eat also plays a major part in your ability to grow as an athlete. This time in your life you body is constantly in flux or changing. So you need to be consuming calories galore. I would say somewhere in the ballpark of 2400 calories a day. It sounds like a lot, but when you really start to look at your daily dietary habits, it is not that much at all. The key is to be eating all day, and what you are eating is the key. Learn to make your own food, go buy a nice size cooler to hold all of your food for the day and you are ready to go. You will also be saving an average $40-$50 a week by packing your own food. The best way to figure it out is eat 5-6 smaller meals throughout the day, breakfast, snack, lunch, snack, dinner and a small snack before bed. If you are not eating breakfast you will set the wrong tone immediately. Tony the Tiger was right, breakfast is what gets our day started. It helps spike insulin levels, which aids in getting the body moving. Also, it helps alleviate the 2 PM bonk where it feels like you got hit by a truck. Below is what could be a sample day of meals:

**Breakfast – 1-2 cups oatmeal w/ banana**

**Snack – Piece of fruit or protein bar or ½ cup (2 handfuls) nuts like almonds or cashews**

**Lunch – Turkey sandwich on wheat bread with green leafy lettuce and a slice of low fat cheese, piece of fruit and some raw veggies (yes raw veggies)**

**Snack – Piece of fruit or protein bar or ½ cup nuts like almonds or cashews**

**Dinner – Chicken breast, 1-cup pasta, 2 cups steam veggies**

**Snack – Protein shake like Myoplex or Muscle Milk 30 minutes before bed**
These are just suggestions and I am not saying cookies, cake, ice cream, soda is a no go, but make those choices few and far between. You will feel better, have more energy and you will get stronger faster.

The other key to nutrition is staying hydrated. The FDA (Food and Drug Administration) says you should have 8, 8oz glasses of water. Studies have shown for active people, like athletes, should be doubling that. The downside is you have to go to the bathroom more than normal, but that is a good thing. At least we know your kidneys are working! Proper hydration allows the body to help recover faster. Soda, sports drinks like Gatorade, coffee, tea is not forms of hydration. Yes sport’s drinks contain sodium, which the body loses during exercise (sweat/salt), but contains more sugar, which actually slows the hydration process. So drink your water.

**Strength training exercises:**

What you need to get your workouts started is a jump rope and your gym clothes. If you belong to a big gym, great, if not use the schools weight room. It is sufficient for what we are looking to achieve.

Warm Up (10 minutes): Jump rope for 5 minutes. The goal will be to jump for 5 minutes straight.

**Active Warm up:**

- **Knee Rolls** – lay on your back with legs up and bent at 90 degrees. Arms extended to the sides, rotate side to side. This will work spinal rotation as well as activate the hips.

- **Knee Pulls** – standing, lift your leg, and grasp your knee and pull up to your chest, the foot on the floor come up on your toe. Alternate legs for 10 reps (5 each leg) this is activating your glutes (butt muscle) and hamstrings.

- **Heel Pulls** – grab the top of your foot and pull back and up on your toe. This will stretch out your quadriceps or front part of your leg.

- **Leg Swings** – standing facing a wall, hands on the wall, swing one leg out to the side and back across your other stationary leg. These swinging movements will open up your hips and hip flexors. Do 10 reps each leg.

- **Deep Body Squats** – hands on your head or out in front of you, squat as deep as you can, the lower the better. Do not let your heels come off the ground. You legs should be at shoulder width apart, maintain a good spine angle.
Lifting Exercises:

- **Neutral Grip Dumbbell Bench Press** – neutral grip is holding the weight and moving the weight if you were holding a hammer. The reason we hold the weight this way is to remove the stress off of the shoulder and rotator cuff. This puts the weight and focus on the movement of the pectoral muscle (chest). Laying flat on a bench, lift the weight down to chest level for a count of 3 and dive up for a count of 1.

- **Chin Up** – grasping a bar shoulder width apart with palms facing you, hang and pull your chin up over the bar.

- **Chin Up Grip Pull Down** – using a lat pull down machine, you grasp the bar using a chin up grip and pull the bar down to the top of chest. Keep a tall spine. Pull the weight down for 1 and raise the bar up for a count of three.

- **Push Up** – keep hands just past shoulder width, keep a straight line from head to toe. Strict form.
• **Dumbbell Shoulder Press Neutral Grip** – seated, hold the weight in neutral grip and arms at 90 degrees (essentially the weight is even with your ears) drive the weight up to arms extended for a count of 1, then lower for a count of 3.

• **Dumbbell Tricep Extension** – seated or standing, hold the weight like a hammer. Extended arms with weight over your head, lower the weight down to the top of your shoulders then raise the weight up like hammer a nail above your head.

• **Dumbbell Curls** – grasping weight palms facing up, curl the weight up to top of your arm. Do this for a count of 1 then lower for a count of 3.

• **Leg Press** – laying at a 45-degree angle in most machine cases, you want your feet just a bit wider than shoulder width. Lower the weight so your knees hit your chest and drive the weight back up. Lower for a count of 3 and drive with a count of 1. Keep your butt down in the seat; if it is coming off, the weight is too heavy.
• **Calf Raises** – either using the leg press machine or a standing calf machine, lower your heal down to 45 degrees and press up to total flexion of the toe. The calf is one of the hardest muscles to develop because it gets uses everyday supporting our body. So the key is to ensure you get full range of motion. In theory, the calves can support 2 ½ x your body weight, but that does not mean you can lift that!

![Calf Raises](image)

Plyo-metrics:

Plyo-metrics is working the fast twitch muscles, which is what we use when we are playing basketball. These muscles allow us to run fast, slide fast, react quickly, and jump high. These movements need to be done explosively and as quick and fast as you can.

• **Standing Broad Jumps** – stand on a line, crouching down using your arms, jump as far out as you can. Landing on your toes in the ready position. DO NOT LAND FLAT FOOTED!

![Standing Broad Jumps](image)

• **Back Board Taps** – standing under the backboard; raise your arms over your head. In a quick motion, jump and touch the backboard. As soon as you land, you jump again taping the backboard. This is a quick off your feet drill, keep your arms above your head the entire time.

• **Lateral Hops** – using a hurdle or cone, something 18 inches tall, stand to one side of the object. You then hop laterally from side to side over the hurdle. Again, quick off your feet, as soon as you land you jump back over the hurdle.

![Lateral Hops](image)
• **One Legged Lateral Hops** – see above and just use one leg at a time.

![One Legged Lateral Hops](image)

• **Box Jumps** – use a plyo box or something 24-36 inches high. Stand in front of the box, crouching down and using your arms, jump up on top and in the middle of the box. Land quietly and softly on the box. Do not land with a thud! Step off the box and repeat.

![Box Jumps](image)

• **Depth Jumps** – use a plyo box 24-36 inches high. Stand on top of the box, step off the box and soon as you hit the group jump outward as far as you can. This is a ground reaction force movement. How fast can you accelerate after you decelerate? Again land light and soft.

![Depth Jumps](image)

**Skills and Drills:**

**Ball Handling** – the goal here is to improve ball-handling skills, having the ability to use each hand equally making you a tougher player to guard.

• **Below the knee power dribble** – in basketball stance, dribble the ball below the knee for 60 seconds. Do this each side.
  
  o Low x-over dribble – b-ball stance arms resting on knees, bounce ball back and forth between hands
- **Up back dribble** – BBS, one side low dribble up and back on each side.
- **Behind back dribble** – BBS like x-over dribble, but behind the back. Arms should feel locked to your hips.

- **Tennis Ball Dribble** – in BBS, take a tennis ball and dribble it below your knee as fast as you can. Keep your head up, the ball will bounce back up, you need to feel it.

- **Speed Dribble** – dribble the ball up the court as fast as you can. The goal here is to get up the court with the least amount of dribbles. Also, you must be in control, if the ball is bouncing way out of control, slow it down.

- **Ferg Drills** – these drills are done to work on different dribbles but also change of pace with the basketball. It is a series of 4 styles of dribbles, x-over, between the legs, spin dribble and retreat dribble (you dribble to the spot then take two dribbles in retreat, change direction and go). You can set up chairs at different angles on the floors or just dribble 4-5 times in on direction then change direction.

**Shooting Drills:**

- **Spot shooting** – shoot 5-10 shots on various spots on the floor. Start in close and work your way out. *** Understand to focus on shots you are comfortable with and you know you will get in the game.

- **Free Throws** – key here is to find a routine and do it every time you step to the line. Always go to the line knowing you are going to make it.

- **Mikan Drill** – standing under the basket, shoot a layup on the right side with the right hand, rebound, come back underneath the bucket and shoot a layup with the left hand. Go back and forth for 30 seconds. Purpose of this drill is to use both hands equally shooting the ball. It will also teach your footwork jumping off your correct foot when shooting a layup.

- **Hurley Drill** – named after Duke PG Legend Bobby Hurley. Start at one foul line, dribble as fast as you can to the other foul line, come to a control shop and shoot from that foul line. Rebound your shot and turn back and do the same to the other foul line. Go back and forth for 5 minutes. This is a conditioning drill you should feel fatigued when you are done.

- **Hand in the Face Drill** – if you have a partner great, have them stand with their hands up on a spot on the floor. Stand a few feet away and practice shooting over someone’s outstretched hands. If you are solo on this drill, use a folding chair and a broom. Stick the
broom through the back of the chair and presto, instant defender. You need to learn to shoot with a hand in your face, this is what this simulates.

**Stretching and Recovery:**

When you are lifting, running or doing anything that involves the muscles to work, they are getting broken down. To alleviate this stress, we stretch the muscles after a workout. Stretching allows the muscles that you just worked a chance to relax and recover. When a muscle is working, it contracts. You need to think of a contraction like making a fist. When the contraction is released, it is like opening your fist. Stretching allows blood flow to get back into the muscles you just worked. Blood allows oxygen to get to the muscles, which aids in recovery. It reduces the amount of soreness the muscles feel. It also helps keep the muscles supple and keeps them elongated. When muscles are tight, you feel stiff and it seems like it takes forever to get “loose”. Stretching helps in keeping you loose and in turn allows you to make gains and not loses.

Recovery is a science on its own. Companies like Gatorade ([www.gssi.com](http://www.gssi.com)) have spent millions upon millions of dollars and man-hours researching how to help the body recover. I am sure most of you have seen the commercials on how Gatorade got their name well today is no different. As science and technology thrusts the sports world foreword, every thing must be taking into consideration. So how do we recover? Well, there is no real easy answer, but here are some things that if you do post workout you will not feel like a truck hit you.

- Stay hydrated throughout the day; as well as during exercise you should be drinking water. During activities drinks like Gatorade (I am not endorsing this product, but this is one you can all relate too) will help replenish lost electrolytes that you lose during exercise. Hydration is like lubricating a bike chain. It will run smoothly as you change gear to gear. A rusty chain is stiff and becomes brittle. So drink your water.

- Make sure you have eaten something at least one hour before you workout. The reality is, your body during working out actually is using food you ate a day or two ago. However, putting some quality fuel in the tank will allow you to keep your energy levels high, which gives you the maximum output during exercise. Chips and a Coke, not quality fuel.

- When you are done working out there is a window of time, called the “Protein Window.” This window is critical to pay attention to. It is during this time, roughly 60-90 minutes post workout, that your body needs protein. Proteins are the building blocks of matter and post workout your body is in protein depleting. So during this time it is key to eat carbohydrates with protein, so maybe pasta and chicken. What this will do is fill this window with good fuel to help speed recovery. What I typically do is have a protein shake (make your own using good protein powder) or something pre-made like Muscle Milk right when I get done. Then an hour after that I eat a normal meal. All the while drinking fluids to help rehydrate. If you fail to fill this window, you feel run down, lethargic, essentially beat up. So do not miss this window.
Sleep is really the final component. With a million things going on in your world, you need to make the time to get good sleep. That does not mean, during the week you go to bed every night at 1 AM, up at 7 AM for school then sleep in until Noon on Saturday. That is counter-productive. You should get 8 hours of sleep, at your age your body is going through a whirlwind of changes and it is when we sleep most of that activity takes place. It gives your muscles a chance to regroup, repair and grow. This will help in fighting off illness.

**Recommended Stretches:**

- **Hamstrings-** sit on the floor with one leg straight in front of you and the other leg bent in with the sole of he foot touching the inside the thigh. Keep your back straight, bend at the waist and lean foreword. If you can, grab the top of your toe to pull you foreword. Go to the point where you feel the stretch. After 15 seconds, take a deep breath and exhale and continue to stretch. Do this a total of 3 times. Do not bounce. Repeat on the other side.

- **Hips-** Lie on your back, Bend your left leg and pull it toward grasping the top of the knee. Pull your knee to your chest until you feel the stretch. Hold for 15 seconds, take a deep breath and pull a little further. Do this 3 times. Repeat on other side.

- **Low Back-** lie on your back with legs bent. Grasp the top of your knees and pull your legs to your chest. Lift your head and shoulders 6 inches off the ground and hold for 30 seconds.

- **Quadraceps-** Lie on your right side, grab your left ankle and pull back slowly on your leg. You should feel a stretch right above the knee on the left leg. Hold for 30 seconds. Repeat on other side.

- **Calves-** Stand arms length away from the wall with your feet shoulder width apart. Slide the left foot back approximately 18 inches, keeping the knee straight and both heels flat on the floor. Bend your right knee and slowly move your pelvis (stomach) forward until you feel a stretch in the calf and Achilles tendon. Hold for 15 seconds, then release. Repeat on opposite side.

There are a lot more stretches, but these basic ones will allow you to get your muscles to relax.

**Weight Training routine: (See Attached sheet)**

Always use good technique and do not think you can lift more than you can. Follow the notes under each workout. Again this is a basic workout, which will give you a sound foundation to take you to the next level of weight training. Each weight-training workout will begin with a plyo workout.
Summary:

The above program is designed to give you an introduction on what it takes to improve your overall game of basketball. You need to practice each day with purpose. You need to never lose sight of the fact, that there is a player out there right now doing this stuff already. He is committed to making you look bad on the floor. Stick with it, work at it, and never give up!

Good Luck!
Weeks 1-4 - Base Phase

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Exercise</th>
<th>Sets</th>
<th>Reps</th>
<th>Rest</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Grip DB Press</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Chin Up</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>AMA</td>
<td>60s</td>
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<tr>
<td>Push Up</td>
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<td>AMA</td>
<td>60s</td>
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<tr>
<td>DB Shoulder Press</td>
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<tr>
<td>DB Tricep Extension</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60s</td>
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<tr>
<td>DB Curls- Seated</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leg Press</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60s</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Calf Raises</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>60s</td>
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** Weight should be a weight you can lift 12 reps, but you are only getting 10
Each week go up in weight 2.5-5 lbs

Weeks 5-8 Heavy Phase

<table>
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<th>Sets</th>
<th>Reps</th>
<th>Rest</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Neutral Grip DB Press</td>
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<td>Chin Up</td>
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<tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>60s</td>
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** Heavy 4 weeks, whatever weight you ended with, you will add 10lbs to.
The weight you want to lift is for 8 reps but only 6.

Weeks 9-12 Endurance Phase

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<tr>
<td>Calf Raises</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>60s</td>
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** High repition allows us to build some endurance strength.
You are coming off a heavy phase but be careful, you need to get all 15 reps

Plyo workout to be done before lifting

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Plyo Workout Day 1</th>
<th>Sets</th>
<th>Reps</th>
<th>Plyo Workout Day 2</th>
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